RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

APRIL 1986 232 Ogden Avenue — Jersey City, N.J. 07307 — (201) 798-0493

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL.

UNDER THE CHAIR

(The following article is the first in a series of columns that will inform the neighborhood about certain issues and concerns. It will be divided between fact and opinion.)

Fact: The status of Mountain Road is undetermined. At our last meeting in March, Councilman Aviles revealed that the City does not want to open the Road. Mr. Barnes of the Engineering Department has stated that the Road in its present condition is unsafe and unfit for automobile traffic. He will not allow it to be reopened. Mr. Lando of Streets and Sewers has estimated that repair of the Road with cobblestones would coast approximately $.1 million. The option presented to RNA is to asphalt the bad spots in the Road for the purpose of reopening it. At our next meeting in April, Mr. Lando will be a guest speaker with Councilman Aviles to further discuss this neverending issue in our neighborhood.

Fact: As regards the property at 215 Ogden Ave., RNA has contacted Felix Gabress at the office of Property Conservation. After inspecting the premise, Mr. Gabress informed RNA that his office was unable to locate the present owners. He has forwarded the information to Helen Savage of the Building Department for followup. He has also contacted the Department of Sanitation to clean up the debris in front of the house.

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"HOW LUCKY WE ARE TO LIVE HERE"

What can I tell you about this neighborhood after living here for 58 years. I was 10 years of age when my family moved to Ogden Avenue. Being Poles, I don't think we were really accepted at first because it was predominantly a German neighborhood. After a few months we were accepted because it was "good morning", "good afternoon", etc. The neighbors must have realized we were a hard working, good living, clean family.

Ogden Avenue was quite different 50 years ago - the women worked in the morning hours and in the afternoon they were dressed. Most women put aprons on to prepare dinner and serve their families. They stood at their gates and waited for their loved ones to come from school or from work. Many adults worked in the big City and arrived home approximately the same time. It was wonderful to see in the summer months the children playing happily, and there was laughter which doesn't seem to exist today on Ogden Avenue.

Our shopping area was Palisade Avenue along which we had all the facilities and stores to maintain our homes. We had two drug stores, bookbinder, printer, kosher butcher, kosher grocery store, candy store, shoemaker, two fruit stores, German bakery, German delicatessen, lumber store which is still on Palisade Avenue. We also had a glass cutter, small apparel shop, paint store, bank, florist, ice cream parlor and they made their own ice cream. Also, we had a large butcher shop where we purchased our meat. The apparel

(CONT'D ON PAGE 4)

UNDER THE CHAIR

(CONT'D FROM P. 1)

This property has been vacant since it caught fire around Xmas, 1985. Neighbors have been concerned about the house and the debris that has been left in the front yard for these past four months. If anyone knows how to contact the present owners, please let RNA know. We can only hope for a speedy resolution of this problem.

Fact: In our continuing efforts to reclaim Riverview Park, RNA met with Nicholas Polanin, the temporary officer at the Forestry Division on March 18th to inspect the Park. (Richard Wolowicz, the former Forester has gone on to greener pastures at P.S.E.G.) The maintenance and upkeep of the trees in the Park have been long neglected. The concerns of the neighborhood include the removal of dead and hanging branches, the basic pruning of all the trees, the removal of four dead trees and the containing of the erosion on the hill behind the bandstand. Mr. Polanin assured us that when the dead trees are removed, they will be replaced with healthy, young ones in the same area. He stated that this work would be done on a reasonable and realistic time schedule. Work has already begun with the removal of one dead tree near Palisades and Griffth and the partial removal of a large poplar on the corner of Ogden and Bowers.

Fact: On March 20th, Jersey City held a Public Auction of city-owned property at City Hall. Sources have confirmed that the old cement factory on Patterson Plank Road (Block 752; Lot 6) was sold for $300,000.00. Councilman Hart volunteered to find out the identity of the new owner and their intentions for the land. The property, located between the Plank Road and the railroad tracks on the Hoboken border, is zoned for industrial use. It is 36,337 square feet in area.

Opinion: At our February meeting, during an endless discussion about the reopening of Mountain Road, Dear Howell pleaded with the group to stc arguing with each other. He stated that this issue could tear the organization apart. RNA should take hi words to heart. No matter how strong any of us feel about an issue - whether it be Mt. Road, Newport City or a new development in the Heights - we must respect each other's opinion, be they a fellow member or a guest speaker.

Opinion: We were informed recently by our thick-skinned Councilman of Ward D that he is upset by a negativ tension that exists between him and several members of RNA. He suggests that this hostility inhibits communication between him and RNA. To clear the air, so to speak, RNA would like to invite Mr. Hart to write about his concerns in our next newsletter.

Opinion: We thought it informative to reprint part of a letter written by Janet Moore and published in the Jersey Journal on March 19th. It was about the Board of Adjustment meeting regarding the proposed Waverly Street development: "Testimony... was presented by the developers and accepted by the Board. When the neighbors, who live in that area, protested they were severely reprimanded by some Board members who said Jersey City residents must be prepared to make sacrifices and not complain when these proposals come. We must not protest when they offer to turn our two family neighborhoods into canyons created by the apartment houses they propose to build. we must learn to live with these intolerable conditions because - Jersey City needs the taxes....What we need instead is for your Board of Adjustment to adjust their thinking and realize that we, the citizens, have a greater right to our own neighborhoods than fly-by-night developers who come in and buy a small piece of land and overdevelop it."

NEXT RNA MEETING TUES. APRIL 8 7:00 P.M.
HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER, OGDEN AVE.

ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

NOTES FROM TED CONRAD...

ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

Councilman Aviles, the thirty-two year old attorney chosen by Mayor Cucci to succeed Joseph Brooks as guest speaker at our March 11th meeting gave us some interesting insights of what's going on in City Hall.

He said that the administration had just about come to the end of giving any more tax abatements to waterfront developers.
Perhaps he did not realize that the Newport City Developers had already gotten enough grants and CDGB loans to build their projects without having to use their own money.

He wasn't quite clear about why the two billion Newport City project, which jumped to ten billion over night was granted a tax abatement in half an hour without studying plans or having a model on view in the council chamber. The same was true for Porte Liberte which was to be a Caven Point park with Green Acres money because Hudson County is 50% deficient in parkland.

When the subject of Mountain Road was brought up he hemed and hawed about the high cost of replacing the eight by thirty ft. section of missing cobble-stones which he said engineer Barnes estimated would cost one million dollars to replace, all of which received howls and cat calls from the audience.

Mr. Aviles may be tops in legal matters concerning tenants but I am not so sure he's up to dealing with fast buck developers. All the more reason for all of us to be more concerned avout what's really happening in City Hall. All these tax abatements will be made up with higher taxes for the rest of us in the form of higher assessments which could double our taxes and rents. In the past when assessments went up the tax rate came down, but with President

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FLEA MARKET

Have you been doing your spring cleaning? May 3rd is getting closer so remember not to throw your "junk" away--save it for the flea market.

COST: $7.00 - rent table
$5.00 - bring your own table

Any profits made from your table are yours.

ALL MONEY MUST BE IN ON OR BEFORE APRIL 19th.

If you do not wish to rent a table but have some "junk", RNA is accepting donations to sell at the RNA table.

ATTENTION BAKERS - We need cookies, cupcakes, cakes, bread, etc. to sell at the RNA table.

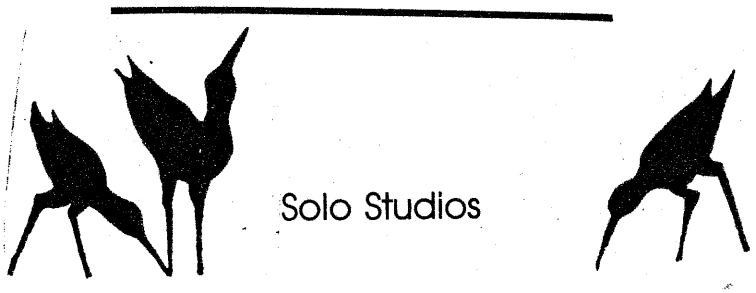
VOLUNTEERS - We need help with picking up and returning the tables used at the flea market. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

Remember to clean up your area when the flea market is over.

The hours of the flea market will be 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Set up time will be 8:00 a.m.

Anyone may contact me regarding the above at the April meeting or by phoning me at 420-1490.

Carin Lewis



On May 3rd from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00p.m., the gallery at the Solo Studio, 469 Palisade Avenue (directly across from the park)run Dean Howell, will be open to the public. In between flea marketing you may wish to take a break and see an interesting exhibit.

LUCKY TO LIVE HERE

(CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

shop opened on Sunday morning just in case you needed, socks, stockings, etc. There was a feed store for birds and an Italian bakery where they baked bread. You could buy pizza, sit at a table and eat it - they just had a few tables. Best of all we had the Victory Bakery and at about 10:30 pm you could purchase hot rolls, hot bread, bring it home, butter it and you had a meal fit for a king. People shopped on Central Avenue which was one of the most beautiful shopping districts in the city. The stores remained open to 9:30 or 10:00 pm - very lit up and people spent Saturday nights walking up and down the Avenue shopping. The stores were individually owned except of course the shoe stores and a few others. We had the most gorgeous lingerie, dress shops - its almost unbelievable looking back because look what we have now.

An ice man delivered ice twice a week because we had no refrigerators in those days - you shopped every day European style. Public Service collectors came once a month and we paid our gas and electric bill which amounted to approximately 6 dollars a month. Every so often a small truck would pass through and the owner would sharpen our knives, etc. Once in awhile a one man band, drum on his back, cymbals, harmonica, etc, would dance and play in the street and of course everyone gave him money. The streets were cleaned by street cleaners pushing brooms and during the summer months a large water wagon drawn by horses would spray the streets to clean and cool them. The small carousel would come during the summer and youngsters would ride on it.

Of course there were sad times on Ogden Avenue - the depression came and my Dad personally delivered food baskets with turkeys for the Thanksgiving Holiday - organizations purchased them so no one was really hungry.

During the winter Ogden Avenue was a forgotten avenue and many times all the neighbors had to dig Ogden Avenue and Griffith Street out so that the men folk could go to work but this was not so bad because now men worked in the suburbs and employment shifted from New York City to the suburbian areas because men and women owned automobiles.

The Parkview Tavern on Palisade Avenue was our first aid station - someone needing help for window washing, car repairing, house repairing, etc. could call and there was always someone who could help you. We were a neighborhood then.

I could go on and on about why I love my neighborhood, being of Polish extraction, I need roots like my Dad before me. The younger people have left for greener pastures, but I remain because I am Jersey City and what we have here I could never duplicate any place else. Of course you know I am referring to our view. I have watched it change year after year - new buildings constantly being constructed. Once when Dr. Tudor came to my house he remarked "you have the whole world here" - so I have always remembered - we have the whole world. Many dawns I have seen in other parts of the world but to me the sun rising behind the Manhattan skyline is the most beautiful. Seeing it from my kitchen or family room day after day, it becomes more precious as the years pass. Never would I trade our majestic Hudson and our beautiful Lady in the Harbor for any other location. Ask me to tell you about Ogden Avenue and the way it was, I really could go on and on about how lucky we are to live in this area.

Francis Santoro

A Rose is God's Autograph

NOTES FROM TED CONRAD...

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(CONT'D FROM P. 3)

Regan cutting down on aid to cities the tax rate will remain the same if not higher to support the vast army of bureaucratic check collectors we have in the city.

Our taxes are high because we have staffs of planners, engineers and the Redevelopment Agency geared to selling the city to developers in the hopes of getting enough taxes from ratables to bail out the high cost of running the city. Only trouble is that after we get big time developers signed up the City Council, afraid of losing a project when a builder cries poverty quickly grants him a tax abatement which then cancels out any lucrative gain we could have gotten to lower the tax rate.

Without staffs of planners and the Redevelopment Agency we would have a twenty-five percent lower tax rate and less development which in turn would end the inflationary realestate cycle and halt the high density projects developers claim they need in order to make their projects pay. We need lower density in order to be able to get around the city with an automobile. Present high destiny waterfront projects it has been estimated will add 40 thousand more cars to the area.

Let's cut down on development and concentrate on maintenance of the parks and public property so that we can be proud again of a well maintained city. If developers want to come to Jersey City let them do their own planning and financing without any help from the city just like every other homeowner has been doing as long as he has owned his property.

LA POSTA SPEAKS OUT

ON SPOT ASSESSMENTS

The concept of spot assessments is quite simple. It is a means by which a city can indiscriminately reassess property for the purpose of raising revenue. It is also considered illegal in the State of New Jersey. In the case of Jersey City, there are no clear rules on reassessment. Some municipalities either reassess at the sale of a home or once every couple of years, uniformly throughout the town. Jersey City, motivated by a need to raise revenue, has decided to spot assess a select few homes based on home purchases in the past several years. I happen to be one of those fortunate, along with several others within RNA. Mind you, there are approximately 35,000 homeowners in this city, but only 2,500 were spot assessed. However, all of Jersey City is supposed to come into 100% reassessment by the end of 1987.

In the meantime, I have the distinct pleasure of being penalized for having purchased more recently than my neighbors. I will have paid close to two full years in 100% increased taxes prior to the rest of the city catching up. And for what? I receive no preferential treatment when it comes to city services. Should I be taxed differently from everybody else?

Now, I don't object to an increase in taxes; I first request for it to be fair and evenly distributed. The city could have achieved the same revenue increase by simply raising everyone's tax bill 5-10%. Mine increased nearly 100%. One of the inequities is that I pay taxes on a one family home equivalent or more than some of my neighbors pay on two and three family homes. These homes are worth significantly more than mine by the mere fact of their multi-family use.

At a time when our city is freely giving out tax abatements,

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NEW JERSEY WATERFRONT MARATHON

Last year was the first running of the New Jersey Waterfront Marathon and many of us can relate some horrifying tales of our inability to get around and out of Jersey City during the marathon.

Much of the blame can be addressed to Mr. Richard Reidy (Logistics Director), who did little to negotiate with the proper departments of the city (police, fire, emergency aid), until just a few scant weeks before the running of the marathon.

This year the Marathon will be on Sunday, May 4; starting at 9:30am at Liberty State Park. After much negotiation, there have been some logistical changes but, we of our area will still be boxed in from approximately 9:35am to 2:30pm.

One of the major changes is in the route. Concerning our area, the runners will be coming up Newark Ave. (from downtown) and then turn onto Central Ave. at the highway and proceed up Central and at Washington park proceed down the south viaduct to Hoboken. On the return, the runners from Bergenline Ave. will once again turn onto Central Ave. at 15th St. in Union City and proceed down Central and turn at Newark Ave. to the downtown area.

The Time Table and Marathon Route will be published in the Jersey Journal as soon as all is certified by the State Athletic Commission, which hopefully will be before May 4th.

I have been in contact with the Police Director's Office to address the problem of intermittent traffic glow between runners; but as of this time, meetings are still being held and hopefully, by our April 8th meeting I will have more concrete answers on this major issue.

If you would like to register any complaints or gain more information I ask that you contact Mr. Richard Reidy, Logistics Director of the Marathon, at One Path Plaza (795-8895).

Kathy Dellaglio

Post Note: After completing this article I received a call from Capt. McCormack of the Police Director's Office who informed me that there will be either a police officer or crossing guard stationed at each corner of Central Ave. and that they will allow for an intermittent traffic flow between runners.

NEWSLETTER STAFF: Risa Gerber, Edith Springer, Carin Lewis, Marie (Dee) Ipsaro, Kathy Brennan, Maria Tuzzo, Raquel Sweeny.

LA POSTA

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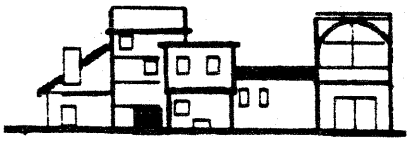
we, the homeowners, receive no incentives. I do understand that in order to lure a certain amount of development, the principle of the tax abatements is commonly used to offset the developers' risk. But are we not all taking a risk, especially the people who have stayed in this city for years as the backbone and life support system? Without the "old timers" the city would have decayed further.

What about myself and the other newer members of our neighborhood? We must appear as a breath of fresh air and a sign that things might be changing and hopefully for the better. We too, like developers in Jersey City, are taking a risk. I have spent much time and effort, sweat, money and frustration in trying to restore a badly neglected house. For this I have received the highest praise of thanks from our fair city -- SPOT ASSESSMENT!

Rich La Posta



Dear Neighbor:

I overheard you the other day in the A & P, I saw you talking on the corner, I watched as you walked your dogs; you were talking of the city, the area, the neighborhood -- some of it positive, a lot of it negative. You've noticed the changes -- the developement of properties (both new and existing), the opening of the nursing facility, the change in the traffic flow. You complained about age old problems -- city administration, police protection, sanitation and then you returned home, put your groceries away, unleashed the dog and went about your daily routine.

I ask you, did you come to a conclusion? Did you solve any of the problems? Did you just feel better getting it off your chest? Or, have you resolved yourself to the fact that nothing can be done? The problems too many, too complex, too insurmountable? Do you feel no one cares, who'll listen, or why bother?

I can agree with you that at times it seems no one cares, no one listens, but, I can't agree with you on "why bother." I ask you, where would we be if Henry Ford said: "Why bother"? Where would we be if Thomas Edison said: "Why bother"? Where would we be if Sir Thomas Crapper* said: "Why bother"? -- we'd be walking - with a candle - to the out house.

I want to let you know someone does care, someone does listen, someone does bother and that someone is "us" -- the RNA. We all felt the same as uou, as individuals, but, we took the first step (which is always the hardest) and cmae together and became "us." And we have succeded and we have failed, we have agreed and we have disagreed, we have laughed and we have yelled. Sound familiar? I've just described a family -- for that is what we are. And we need "you" to become an active part of "us." On the second Tuesday of every month we meet at 7PM in the Harbor View Nursing Facility. Some of our meetings are too long, too boring and too repetitious but, so are the problems. The coffee may get cold, tempers may get hot, but, the cake is always good.

We have committees: Planning and Developement, Community Awareness, Sanitation, Parks and Recreation, Crime Watch and Traffic. All of our committee members are overworked and "underpaid" but, much loved.

So I ask that after you've put away the groceries, unleashed the dog, and finished with your daily routine, come actively join our family at the RNA. We'll listen-- we won't have all the answers but, together as a group, we can make a difference, we can have an impact on what is going on in our city, our area, our neighborhood.

Hoping to see you on April 8.

Your neighbor,

Kathy Dellaglio

* Sir Thomas Crapper invented the flush toilet in 1878.

EXCERPT FROM THE JERSEY CITY DOG ORDINANCE

Sec. 6-18. <u>Dog feces: removal and disposal required</u>.

Each owner of a dog shall immediately remove and dispose of any feces deposited by such dog in public places* by any sanitary method.

***Public place shall include every sidewalk, gutter, street, park or any other place within the City which is accessible to the general public or dogs.**

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Planning and Development Committee met on Tuesday, March 18th at Vito Brunetti's house and examined development proposals for two different sites in our neighborhood. In both cases, the developers came to our meeting to present their proposals.

First, we met with Mr. and Mrs. Wajswol of Hoboken. They have a contract to buy the two empty lots on Ogden Avenue just north of the corner of Franklin Street. They showed us drawings of a four-story brick building, all parking garage on the first floor and three stories of apartments above that. The building would have twelve units and would provide eleven or twelve parking spaces in its garage. The architect had made an effort to make the building somewhat sympathetic to the older character of our neighborhood by including bay windows and a pitched roof in his design. Considerable discussion followed the presentation. While some members appreciated the high number of parking spaces and the attempt to integrate the building into our neighborhood, the majority of members were dissatisfied with the building. Most people thought that anything built on that site should adhere to the requirements of our R-2 zone, which allows only two-family houses. Some thought that this project would be a precedent for other large variance-requiring developments on the hill.

Next we met with Kevin Wilkes and Peter Fioretti of Waterfront Development, also from Hoboken, who would like to convert the brick industrial building on Sherman Ave. (across from P.S. 8) into a 54-unit condominium. Their plans call for adding three stories to the smaller of those two buildings and for making the ground floor a parking garage. Again, the majority of members present expressed opposition to the proposal. Even though the drawings showed a reasonably handsome building, the main concern of the objecting members was that the building would not provide the number of off-street parking spaces required by zoning law, and many people are worried that the parking situation in the Heights is on its way to becoming intollerable. The building would also be an obvious violation of R-2 zone requirements.

Further discussion of these two projects can take place at our next general meeting where we will have the drawings of the Ogden Ave. proposal for everyone to see.

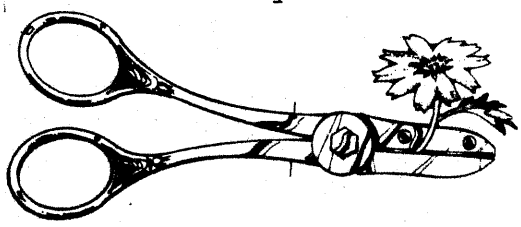
Randy Sanford

PARK CLEANUP

The very observant among you may have noticed that the Spring Cleaning has been strategically scheduled for the weekend before the Flea Market, to be held on Saturday, May 3rd in Riverview Park. Come on out and join your friends and neighbors in getting our park all spruced up for the Flea Market.

Show up on Saturday, April 26th and/or Sunday, April 27th anytime between 10 and 6. Bring a broom, dustpan, work gloves, etc. Heavy duty plastic bags will be provided, thanks to the ever-helpful Jersey City Incinerator Authority.

Anne Hart



REMEMBER: While you're doing your Spring Cleaning--whatever is too good to throw out, you can sell at the Flea Market!

Anne Hart

The following is a letter RNA received from JOAN A. EARLS, Director, Division of Leisure Activities, J.C.

March 19,1986

Dear Mr. Brunetti:

I appreciate having been invited to attend the past meeting of RNA. I found the meeting to be most interesting and informative. You have a very vocal group. It is certainly a pleasure to see so many people willing to be involved in their neighborhood and its parks (which I personally deal with).

A few of the members had made suggestions about trash receptacles. I understand the nature of their requests, so I have ordered a new design, which I hope to have in place in the near future. If this design proves to work successfully, then we will take steps to install additional ones.

Hopefully, the placement of these receptacles will be an incentive for people to refrain from littering the park. I would also hope that it would act as a deterrent for the dog lovers who are accustomed to walking away from their dog's "litter".

I am looking forward to attending your next meeting.

Sincerely,

JOAN A. EARLS, DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF LEISURE
ACTIVITIES

GUEST SPEAKERS

At our next meeting on April 8th, RNA will have Sal Lando of the Division of Streets and Sewers and Councilman Geo. Aviles as guest speakers. They will discuss and entertain questions about Mountain Road.

RNA THANKS CLAIRE GAITO FOR THE DELICIOUS VICTORY CAKE SHE BAKED.

WELCOME HOME DAVID, RAQUEL & FAMILY

WE HAVE MISSED YOU!

It was a long seige for the Sweenys but they persevered and came home March 19, 1986 with two beautiful little girls--Rosalene Raquel, and Marielle Christine. It was a happy day for "Grandma" Madge Sweeny, who has been anxiously waiting for their arrival since November 28, 1985.

I'm sure they were helped by the prayers of their many friends, some lighting candles in church, and Madeline Rea's Special Novena.

Congratulations "Mom" and "Dad" Sweeny from the RNA. May you have many years of happiness with your little girls.

Marie (Dee) Ipsaro

RNA SPRING CLEANING

It's Spring! Time to clean out those attics, cellars, and backyards. On Saturday, April 26th and Sunday, April 27th the Sanitation Committee of the Riverview Neighborhood Association will have our Second Annual Spring Cleaning.

Dumpsters will be provided, thanks to the Jersey City Incinerator Authority, at the following locations:

*Ferry Street-between Ogden Avenue and Palisade Avenue
*Griffith Street-between Ogden Avenue and the cliff

Unfortunately, we could not get a third dumpster for Cuneo Place on these dates. However, if there is interest, we can get one for another weekend. How about it? Let me know!

Anne Hart

RNA ESPECIALLY THANKS REY AND JAY TORRES WHO COLLATED, FOLDED AND STAPLED THE RNA NEWSLETTER WITH KATHY BRENNAN.

GARAGE SPACE SOUGHT

I am looking for garage space for my car, preferably on Ogden Avenue. Please contact me if you or someone you know has a space to rent.

Vito Brunetti
798-0493

PASSOVER

The Jewish holiday of Passover begins the evening of the 23rd of April and ends the first of May. This holiday commemorates the release of the Jewish tribes from Egyptian slavery and the beginning of a free Jewish state in the land of the forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In the Jewish homeland, today, the holiday is celebrated in a variety of ways, while in the Diaspora, or lands outside Israel, the commemorative celebrations are characterized by religious observance.

Israeli villages, such as the socialist organizations of Moshavim and Kibbutzim do not generally follow the letter of the law in strict observance, but rather reflect the spirit of the law with songs and dance, readings, and other displays of the creative spirit, such as art works. More observant Jews inside Israel and in the Diaspora, follow the traditional orders of ceremony. All preparations are done with the idea of readying for the journey from servitude to freedom as if it were to really occur the same way the original parties prepared their flight. Each house and all its contentsare prepared for the holiday by removing all leavened goods. The Israelites in their haste had no time to wait for their bread to leaven, hence the matza, a flat unleavened cracker is eaten instead of bread. Dishes and all utensils are replaced with two holiday sets, one for dairy and one for meat. Although the holiday is celebrated communally in synagogues, the home is the center of celebrations.

Families and friends gather together to march as one towards liberation, as in the historical account, when all persons who wished to go were included in the exodus, regardless of color, religious belief or national origin.

In the retelling of the events, an essential feature of traditional services, is the reciting of the four questions by a child or youth of the gathering. For the sake of the future, everything is explained to the children, as well as to all others. Respect for the past is also evident in symbolic acts that remember those who suffered as a consaquence of this exodus, for example,every time a cup of wine is drained, drops of each cup are spilled in remembrance of the Egyptian soldiers or other persons who died during the struggle. After the retelling, comes a sumptuous meal followed by songs and discussions and sometimes dancing.

The essential features of this holiday still have impact on my life. As the oldest child, with no brothers, I had the honor of helping prepare the order of the house and meal, and at the ceremony, of reciting the four questions.

The tie between questioning and the larger concepts of freedom became linked in these ritualized domestic scenes. The significance of the right to inquire in a democratic free society is an essential element for the freedoms of speech and the right to know.

The ritual of putting everything in order and being prepared to depart also had a profound personal affect. No possession, no place, no comfort is more important than the price of freedom from slavery. Leaving one's affairs in order and tieing up unfinished business before moving on also becomes habitual through repetitive learning.

The teaching and learning of such an abstract concept as freedom becomes a momentous task. Each generation is enjoined to inculcate the value of freedom in the next generation, for freedom must be sought by successive generations, it cannot be inherited. Rituals

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(PASSOVER CONT'D FROM P. 10)

help to invest symbolic acts with meaning that can be expounded upon through stories and discussions. The repetition of symbolic acts helps to concretely reenforce an abstract principle.

How do we, as Americans, consciously promote the freedoms we enjoy in our own lives as well as in our childrens' lives? Are our individual affairs in order? Do we promote the curiousity and natural inquisitiveness of our children? Are we authoritarian and dictatorial in our interpersonal relationships? Are we ultimately prepared to sacrifice every material advantage and comfort for the pursuit of freedom with its obligations and responsibilities? And what is freedom anyway? A chain of endless questions could continue, but without the benefit of shared discussion, would become tedious. Suffice it to say that spring is coming and whatever holiday is celebrated or not celebrated, a renewed zest for life should help us all overcome the affects of winter.

R. S. Gerber-Kwok

GRANTS FOR PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS

The Jersey City Redevelopment Agency coordinates programs to maintain and upgrade neighborhoods through the Neighborhood Improvement Program. These programs have helped thousands of homeowners obtain grants to help pay for improvements to their properties (grants, not loans).

RNA can have a Program Coordinator come to one of our meetings to give us information about these programs. We will make this suggestion at our next meeting to see if our members are interested.

This information comes from Carolyn Davis, Director of the Neighborhood Improvement Program.

Edith Springer

RNA HOSTS NEW COUNCILMAN

At the March meeting of RNA Jorge Aviles, the new Ward C representative, was the guest speaker. Mr Aviles was first on the agenda and after giving a brief summary of his personal history he proceeded to field questions of concern to the members, ie Mountain Road, developers rebates & new tax assessments etc. Unfortunately Mr Aviles, due to another commitment, had to cut his visit but he has promised to return for a future meeting.

The meeting continued with the reading of the February minutes by out going secretary Ellen Boggs (thanks for a year of great service Ellen). Then committee reports were heard. George Graul, new chairman of the crime committee, gave his first report in this capacity.

Members were then up dated as to on going plans for the Flea Market (May 3rd), clean-up weekend (April 26&27), and park restoration and maintainance. Other items discussed were new building projects in our neighborhood, clogged sewars, dog feces, and the absence of a mail box in our area. These items and many others of interest to us all will be discussed at the April meeting. See you then.

Secretary,
Maria E Tuzzo

RIDING VANS TO NEW YORK?

Many of us are avoiding the 99 and 99S bus which is a horror to ride in and using the small vans which have increased in number and frequency over the past year. The vans are not all authorized by the federal government and those that are not may not carry the proper insurance.

To insure your safety and coverage in case of an accident, it is recommended that you ride only those vans with Federal Authority. These will display the code I.C.C.-M.C. #176504. For further information call 201 854-9794.

Edith Springer

I Remember When...

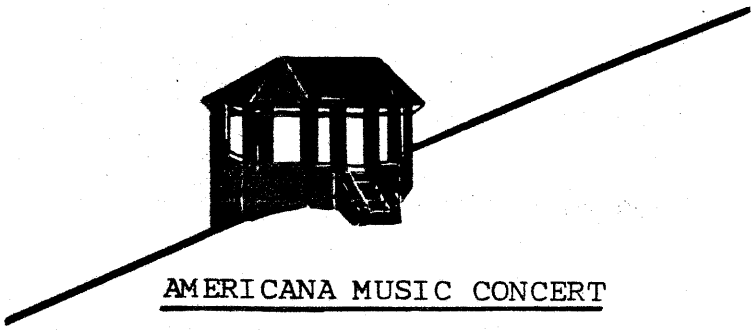
I remember when I was a kid playing in Riverview Park. My friends and I had some great times. In the winter we would all band together when it snowed (which seemed to be a lot more than now) and made snow forts and had snow ball fights (Ogden Ave. vs New York Ave.). We would not give up until the enemies' fort was completely demolished. My fondest memories, though, are of spring and summer. I rode my bike or roller skated through all the winding paths without getting into dog dooh or lots of broken glass. When it really got hot, we would cool ourselves off under the sprinkler of the fire hydrant and get a cold drink of water from the fountain. Also, each morning a group of us would anxiously wait for Minnie to open the gate to the kids playground. Minnie had all kinds of arts and crafts to keep us busy. She also organized all kinds of contests--baby carriage, bike and the annual fashion contest. The fashion contest was held city wide and was the most important one to us girls. The rule was you had to wear one of your mother's dresses. When I was five, I had the proud honor of winning first place in Riverview Park and fourth place in the city. My prize was a pair of roller skates. Minnie also kept a close eye on us when we were on the swings (three sets of large swings and two sets of baby swings--how I miss them for my kids). However, if a kid misbehaved or showed disrespect, Minnie was not the person to be near. She would go after them with her cane and leather belt and yell, "I'm gonna give you a buckala." We all shook in our boots--but not for long because we knew she loved us.

Carin Lewis

A TRASHY IDEA FOR THE PARK

I talked to Joan Earls on Saturday, March 15th about trash baskets for the park. We discussed using wire mesh baskets (like in Hoboken), but we would chain them to trees so they couldn't be dumped over or stolen. The advantages of wire mesh baskets are that they are fire-proof, light, not bad looking, comparatively inexpensive, and easy to maintain. The chains would have to be covered with rubber or plastic tubing to protect the trees and the locks would have to be like-keyed to facilitate emptying the baskets. I think this plan is worth a try.

Anne Hart



AMERICANA MUSIC CONCERT

Get in on the lottery for free tickets to the 8pm Fourth of July fireworks and concert in Liberty State Park starring: John Denver, Johnny Cash, Jack Lemmon, Barry Manilow, Joel Grey, Whitney Houston, Simon Estes, Clamma Dale, and John Williams and the Boston Pops.

Send a postcard with your name, address, and your request for up to six (6) tickets to the address at the bottom of this article. There will be special seating for the physically challenged (wheelchair or ambulatory), so please specify if you need this when you send your ticket request.

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c/o Meadowlands Arena
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Anne Hart

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